to the previous year;

(b) if so, what were the reasons therefor;

(c) what was the turnover during 1989-90; and

(d) what efforts are being made to improve the position?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI SHANTILAL PURUSHOTTAMDAS PATEL): (a) to (c) The total turnover of the State Trading Corporation declined by 28 per cent from Rs. 2594 crores in 1988-89 to Rs. 1855 crores in 1989-90.

The decline in turnover was mainly due to lower import and sales of edible oils, natural rubber and a number of chemicals & drug items because of greater availability of these items in the domestic market

(d) To increase the turnover, STC has drawn up commodity wise action plan for 1990-91 identifying thrust areas and the salient features of the strategy to increase the turnover are as under:—

—strengthen supply base for selected commodities.

—underwrite part or whole of production of identified units for export of manufactured products.

—finance export oriented projects and convert financially weak companies into captive sources of supplies.

—giving a boost to direct buying and exporting.

Effect of gulf crisis on the economics of developing countries

69. SHRI MURLIDHAR CHANDRAKANT BHANDARE

SHRI MAHENDRA PRASAD:

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state·

(a) whether he has asked the World Bank and IMF to take bold initiative by creating a special oil facility to save the economies in the developing countries including India, hit hard by the Gulf crisis;

(b) whether India's suggestion have been considered by the IMF; and

(c) if so, what are the details in this regard?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE AND THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH): (a) Yes, Sir. The Finance Minister in his Speech to the Interim Committee on September 23, 1990 made a suggestion that an oil facility along the lines of the facility created in 1974 be established.

(b) and (c) The IMF has introduced for a temporary period upto the end of 1991, an oil import element into the Compensatory and Contingency Financing Facility to cover excess cost of import of crude petroleum, petroleum products and natural gas.

Shortfall in the production of steel

70. SHRI BEKAL UTSAHI: Will the Minister of STEEL AND MINES be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government had earlier assured that they will not take any decision that would adversely affect the growth of the iron and steel industry in the country;

(b) whether it is a fact that production of crude steel in April-August this year was much less as compared to the same period of last two years;

(c) if so, what were the main reasons for the low production of crude steel and saleable steel; and

(d) what efforts are being made to improve the position?

THE MINISTER OF STEEL AND MINES (SHRI ASHOKE KUMAR

SEN): (a) This is the general policy of Government.

(b) No, Sir.

(c) Does not arise.

(d) In the SAIL Steel Plants, the following steps are being taken to improve production further:—

(i) Ensuring adeqaute availability of input of the right quality.

(ii) Augmenting and optimising captive power generation

(iii) Strict adherance to technological requirements and discipline.

(iv) Improved maintenance of the plants and equipments

(v) Modernisation and technological upgradation of plants in a phased manner.

Wholesale price index and level of inflation.

71. KUMARI ALIA:
SHRI VISHWASRAO RAMRAO PATIL:

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the wholesale price index has been increasing every month this year;

(b) if so, what is the index level registered each month from January onward so far;

(c) what is the rate of inflation recorded each month on a point to point basis;

(d) what are the factors responsible for rise in the level of inflation, and

(e) what measures have been taken to curb the rise in inflation rate and with what results?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE AND THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH): (a) to (c) The requisite information is given in the attached statement. (*See below*)

(d) and (e) The factors responsible for the price rise are fiscal imbalances resulting in high increase in money supply and thus effective demand; supply and demand imbalances in sensitive commodities due to short fall in production and supply, the Gulf crisis necessitating imposition of gulf surcharge on domestic prices of petroleum products and disruption in transport and supply of goods due to disturbed law and order situation in recent months. Government has taken measures both on demand and supply side to keep prices under control On the demand side, the emphasis is on curbing the growth of liquidity through curbs on government expenditure; reduction in budget deficit and growth of money supply. On the supply side measures are being taken to improve the availability of essential commodities through larger allocations for the Public Distribution System and action aganst hoarders and blackmarketeers has also been intensified.

Statement

Movement of W.P.I. (1981-82=100)

Months	Index		Annual Inflation Rate
	Monthly	Average	
	1989	1990	1990
1	2	3	4
January	155·8	168 9	7·8
February	155·9	168·8	8 3